A VIEW OF THE *PRESENT STATE* OF IRELAND,

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS

OF THE

DISTURBANCES

IN THAT COUNTRY;

AND

A Narrative of Facts,

ADDRESSED TO

THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

BY AN OBSERVER.

The Laws! corrupted to their ends who make them,
Serve but as instruments of some NEW tyranny,
Which every day starts up to enslave us DEEPER.

OTWAY.

A vigour beyond the Law.

Vide WYNDHAM.

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A VIEW OF THE *Present State of Ireland*, &c. &c.

THE many arduous and difficult ſituations in which hiſtory has placed the Britiſh nation, never demanded more urgently an unprejudiced and unimpaſſioned conſideration from the Engliſh people, than the preſent awful criſis; when opinion, wavering with tremulous incertitude and continual anxiety, knows not which ſyſtem ſhall prevail—vice or virtue—liberty or deſpotiſm.

The nation, languid and exhauſted by war, without any rational grounds to hope for peace; the liberties of the people abridged, if not extinct, and a powerful member of the empire expiring under the mercileſs laſh of military execution, are melancholy truths not to be contradicted; are calamities which prompt and vigorous exertions, on the part of the people, can alone remedy.

A ſhort review of the conduct of his majeſty's miniſters will ſufficiently prove, that their principal object has been to deſtroy the liberties of mankind in general, and to ſtop the progreſs of uſeful and ſalutary reformation in their own

country. They entered into the preſent war (a war unparalleled in calamity and diſgrace) for the purpoſe of re-eſtabliſhing the ancient deſpotiſm of France,* thereby to impede the march of freedom, and overſhadow, by the dark clouds of credulous ſuperſtition and baneful ignorance, the dawn of reaſon in Europe.

When miniſters joined the arms of England to thoſe of the coaleſced deſpots on the Continent, they began inſidiouſly to ſap the freedom and happineſs of the Britiſh empire. To ſtorm liberty in the citadel, would be dangerous; to attack her in the extreme parts, was more conducive to their artful and deſtructive ſchemes of policy. Ireland had long been the victim of miniſterial rapacity and political experiment; and it was the theatre, in their opinion, beſt adapted for trying the effect of thoſe meaſures which were to ſerve as preludes to the grand invaſion of the rights of their fellow-citizens.

At the commencement, and previous to the preſent war, Ireland was diſtracted by internal diſcord and local inſurrections; to account for which ſhall from a part of the preſent inveſtigation.

From the Invaſion of Ireland, by Henry the ſecond, and its ſubſequent ſubjection to Britiſh

* This aſſertion is corroborated by a Memorial of Mr. Burke's, lately publiſhed; wherein he ſays, "The great means therefore of *reſtoring* the monarchy, which we have made *the main object of the war*," &c.

domination,

domination, it was found that the moſt prudent mode which England could adopt, for governing that country, and by which *alone* ſhe could hope to retain the poſſeſſion of it, was by keeping the people *divided*; accordingly every adminiſtration, from that period to the preſent, has acted on this principle; paſſion, prejudice, bigotry, and contending intereſts, were powerful auxiliaries to ſuch a plan; it unfortunately ſucceeded, and Ireland was enſlaved. Her ſenate frequently produced men of ſplendid talents, and unſhaken patriotiſm, who made many ſpirited attempts to reſtore the Independence of their country; but all their efforts proved ineffecient; for the nation was weakened by *diviſion*, and they were oppoſed by Engliſh influence, or polluted by miniſterial corruption.

The war which England made on the American colonies, gave a new and unexpected turn to Iriſh affairs; the army was withdrawn to ſtrangle infant liberty in the new world, and the nation was left defenceleſs and open to the attack of an enemy, who triumphantly inſulted its coaſt. To ſave the country, required an extraordinary effort. The courage and virtue of the land was called forth; and, in a few months, Ireland preſented to aſtoniſhed Europe the illuſtrious Volunteer army, a patriotic phalanx, compoſed of men, who, from numbers, bravery, intrepidity of ſoul, and love of their country, were ſufficient to repel

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any enemy, however powerful, who might dare to invade their ſhores.

In other reſpects England had not been ſo fortunate; abroad ſhe was beaten and diſgraced; triumphant liberty compelled Europe to acknowledge American independence. To permit ſo favourable an opportunity to paſs, without making an exertion to relieve their native land, would have been highly criminal in the patriots of Ireland: the attempt was made, and the friends of freedom in the ſenate, ſupported by the volunteers and the unanimous voice of the nation, ſucceeded in obtaining the *nominal* independence of their country: thus they were obliged to wreſt from England in her adverſity, what in her proſperity ſhe would not have the generoſity to reſtore.

Shortly after peace was concluded with America, miniſters perceived they had been playing a loſing game in Ireland; the volunteer aſſociations had materially altered the face of the country: in many places the Catholics had embodied themſelves into volunteer corps; a friendly intercourſe with their Proteſtant brethren naturally followed; they felt that as Iriſhmen their intereſts were coequal, hatred on account of religion was baniſhed, harmony prevailed; and if not an union of affection, at leaſt an union of political ſentiment appeared to exiſt among the people: of this adminiſtration was

well

well informed, and miniſters trembled for what might be the reſult. To *avert* REFORMATION they felt it *their duty* to *create* DIVISION. Various were the means employed to effect this immoral object; among others, they reverted to the old diabolical one of fomenting thoſe religious feuds which had ſo often conſumed the vitals, and palſied the native energy of the land.

The minions of power, and myrmidons of corruption, were put in motion, to diffuſe their baneful poiſon through every channel of ſociety, to deſtroy the ſource of private friendſhip and public happineſs, and to blaſt, if poſſible for ever, the cheering proſpect of equal freedom and national proſperity. They taught the weak and credulous Proteſtant and Preſbyterian to believe, that if the Catholics, who had obtained arms during the war, were ſuffered to retain them, that they would ſeize on the firſt opportunity to overturn the government, and erect Popery on the ruins of the Proteſtant religion. This, and other arts equally inſidious, had the deſired effect on the minds of many perſons; particularly in the county of Armagh, where the metropolitan reſided. Here fanaticiſm reared her ſtandard, and a number of deluded people entered into a combination for the purpoſe of depriving the Catholics of their arms by *force*. At the *dawn* of day, theſe men in ſtrong parties would enter the houſes of their Catholic neighbours, and carry off

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all the arms they could find; hence they acquired the name of "*Peep-o'-day Boys.*"

For ſome time the Catholics remained patient and tranquil under their ſufferings; at length they declared, that all their efforts to procure legal redreſs had been unavailing; and that the neceſſity of the caſe would oblige them to enter into counter-combinations, to defend their lives and properties againſt a banditti of plundering ruffians, who appeared to be countenanced by adminiſtration, in as much as they were not puniſhed by the criminal law of the land. Theſe two parties had ſeveral encounters, in which victory was various; but many of the Catholic party, wearied out by continued perſecution, fled from Armagh to different parts of the kingdom, particularly to the counties of Louth and Meath. Wherever they arrived they made their brethren acquainted with the wretched ſituation to which they were reduced, and pointed out the urgency there was for their immediately aſſociating, that they might be enabled to repel the attacks of the Peep-o'-day Boys, whoſe numbers, they ſaid, were daily increaſing, and whoſe determination, they aſſerted, was to exterminate all thoſe who profeſſed the Catholic religion: unfortunately they did enter into theſe aſſociations. Led by paſſion, and goaded by perſecution, they proceeded (like the Peep-o'-day Boys, who *firſt ſet the example*, and who never were puniſhed)

to acts of felony, by taking arms by force; but they soon fell victims to their folly and imprudence. This then, whatever interested and designing men assert to the contrary, *this* was the *true origin* and *progress* of Defenderism in Ireland.

It is not the intention of the author of these pages to countenance or excuse the illegal and irregular conduct of the Defenders; but to prove to the most prejudiced mind, by a plain statement of *facts*, that the fault did not originate with the people, but in the malepractices of ministers.

The tumultuous spirit, which manifested itself in several counties, could have been crushed on its first appearance with much ease; but administration looked on with an apathy which many enlightened men declared to be criminal; and it was apparent to all who thought on the subject, that ministers wanted either ability or inclination to restore tranquillity. The Defenders were suffered to proceed until they became very numerous, and had committed such excesses as must ever result from the assemblage of large bodies of men, groaning under the lash of persecution and oppression, without the guidance of either prudence or talent to conduct them. The great object of administration was now complete, for the Protestant was irritated and enraged against the unhappy Catholic, beyond the example of former times; and *division*, the bane of

Irish

Iriſh proſperity, and *ſole cauſe* of Iriſh misfortune, had ſpread its deleterious effects in every village and hamlet, while private confidence and ſocial intercourſe withered by its noxious influence.

Had adminiſtration then (as on a late occaſion), proclaimed an amneſty to all who might be willing to take the Oath of Allegiance, many lives would have been preſerved, and thoſe ſhocking maſſacres which have outraged humanity, and tarniſhed the character of the government, would not have taken place; but ſuch a meaſure did not accord with the intended plan of coercion, or with the paſſions of thoſe who never have diſplayed the policy of enlightened ſtateſmen.

No accommodative, no conciliatory meaſure, was propoſed; the ſoldiery were let looſe upon the Defenders, and the point of the bayonet ſuperſeded the law of the land. To enumerate a tenth of the cruelties exerciſed on theſe wretched and unfortunate men (cruelties which could only be exceeded for enormity by the ſyſtem carrying on in Ireland at the preſent day) would ſwell this publication, far beyond its intended limits; I ſhall however ſtate a few facts which are incontrovertible.

In the county of Meath a number of Defenders had aſſembled, and a party of the army was ſent in purſuit of them: on the firſt appearance of the ſoldiers they diſperſed; but a few, who were cloſely purſued, took refuge in a gentleman's houſe,

houſe, where (after ſecuring the doors) they defended themſelves for ſome time; at length a capitulation was propoſed, and it was agreed to by *all parties*, that the Defenders ſhould deliver themſelves up, to be conveyed to the county gaol for trial at the enſuing aſſizes. The doors were opened, the military entered; but, inſtead of obſerving the terms of agreement, they put every Defender to death. The body of each man "*killed off*" was caſt from a window into the ſtreet; and, for this brutal ferocity the ſoldiers were not even reprimanded.

In the county of Louth there was a party of theſe unhappy men attacked by a ſquadron of dragoons, who could have eaſily made them all priſoners, but no mercy whatever was extended to them: thoſe who eſcaped the ſword, were driven into a river and drowned. And at the head of this military corps was a magiſtrate of the county, a gentleman who holds an eminent ſeat in the Iriſh parliament.

A party of the army was ordered out to attack a body of Defenders, aſſembled near the village of Ballanaugh, in the county of Cavan: on the approach of the military they diſperſed; many of them ſought ſhelter in the village, hiding themſelves under beds, &c. which evinces that their reſiſtance (if they made any) muſt have been feeble, and that it would have been an eaſy matter to make them priſoners; but that would not ſatiate the vengeance of thoſe monſters, who

are ſtained with the blood of the Iriſh peaſantry. The magiſtrates and officers commanding the party ordered the ſoldiers to ſurround the village and ſet it on fire, which order was readily obeyed. Every houſe (with the exception of one) was burned; and many innocent people periſhed in the flames with the guilty. No inveſtigation, no legal proceſs took place; nor has the gentleman been indemnified, to whom the village belonged, for the loſs of his property.

In the counties of Weſtmeath, Longford, and Monaghan, ſimilar exceſſes were committed. To mention the barbarities and ſcenes of horror which took place in the province of Connaught is unneceſſary. The laſt parliament, by an act which diſgraced it, and betrayed the rights of its conſtituents, gave them more ſtrongly to the world than any detailed account can poſſibly do. So flagitious, illegal, and unconſtitutional, was the conduct of the magiſtracy, that adminiſtration *(yes, even the adminiſtration of Ireland!)* was afraid to let the atrocities which had been committed meet the public eye: and miniſters procured a bill of Indemnity to be paſſed in parliament, to ſcreen from puniſhment thoſe officers of the *peace*, who, at the hour of midnight, tore men from the arms of their families, merely on *ſuſpicion* of their being *ſeditious*, and dragged them on board loathſome priſon-ſhips, tranſporting them to deſtructive climates, without *examination*, without *trial*, "*unheard, unpleaded!*" And, for

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theſe *ſervices* and *gallant exploits*, the man who figured foremoſt in the ſcene has been promoted to ſituations of the firſt importance in the nation.

Such meaſures as theſe are but ill calculated to inſpire men with a veneration for the government under which they live. So barbarous a ſyſtem of policy might have ſuited the firſt uſurpers of dominion in Ireland; but at this day, when the mind is expanded and illumined by moral truth and practical philoſophy; when man has caught wiſdom from experience, and his intellect is in a rapid ſtate of improvement; when liberty has ſmiled on mankind; when the people know their rights, and pant to enjoy them; no philoſopher, no enlightened politician *would*, none but men of violent paſſions, whoſe minds were warped by bigotry, and clouded by ignorance *could* adopt a ſyſtem ſo deſtructive of "order and civilized ſociety."

During the performance of theſe melancholy ſcenes in the different counties of Ireland, a ſociety was formed in Belfaſt, and a ſimilar one in Dublin, under the deſignation of United Iriſhmen, compoſed principally of men deeply engaged in commercial or profeſſional purſuits, whoſe ſituations in life raiſed them above the ſuſpicion of mean or intereſted motives; and their virtue, patriotiſm and ſplendid abilities were the theme of public praiſe and admiration. Their enlightened and philoſophic minds had long beheld with regret and indignation the corrup-

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tion of parliament, and the misery and distress visible in all parts of the country; they therefore associated for the purpose of promoting an union throughout the kingdom, as the *only possible means* by which they could hope to obtain Catholic emancipation, and a radical reform in parliament—measures best calculated to alleviate the sufferings of the people, and by which *alone* their liberty and happiness could be permanently secured.

The society in Dublin endeavoured by various publications and addresses to promote union and disseminate political information: their exertions succeeded so well, that petitions were presented from all parts of the nation, signed by all denominations, in favour of Catholic emancipation; unfortunately it was but a transitory gleam of national happiness; for this union so novel and unexpected, became formidable and alarmed government: the grand juries were instructed to declare in favour of Protestant ascendancy; and associations were formed in many parts of the kingdom, for the purpose of creating DISUNION and persecuting the Catholics.

The patriots recommended the holding a convention, as the most constitutional mode of ascertaining the sense of the nation: it was then that the system upon which ministers have uniformly acted for the destruction of liberty began to be more clearly developed. The Convention bill was instantly passed, which prohibited the

meeting

meeting of delegated bodies: the acknowledged right of the people was violated, and one of the moſt admirable features in the Britiſh conſtitution was defaced.

The preſent war with France was proclaimed, and the United Iriſhmen recommended the revival of the volunteer army as the beſt ſource of national defence, adminiſtration had the Gunpowder bill immediately enacted, which prevented the aſſembling of armed aſſociations: thus the Volunteers, who had been the admiration of the world, who firſt raiſed Ireland above the political horizon, and made her viſible among the nations of the earth; who preſerved to George the third the Iriſh crown; were inſulted and traduced; were calumniated, degraded and diſgraced, by the very men whoſe power they had ſupported, and whoſe lives and properties they had protected during the unnatural war with America.

The ſociety of United Iriſhmen, in Dublin, was depreſſed by the hand of power; ſome of its members were ſentenced by the houſe of Lords, *without trial*, to heavy fine and impriſonment. Corruption and oppreſſion were triumphant; for they were *ſtrong* in the *diviſion* of the country.

About the time that thoſe meaſures were adopted in Ireland a Convention of Delegates, from various patriotic ſocieties in Great Britain, met in Scotland; but they were diſperſed by the magiſtracy, and prevented from coming to any

deciſion;

deciſion: ſeveral of the deputies were arreſted; and the moſt arbitrary puniſhments were inflicted on men who adorned ſociety, and whoſe public and private virtues rendered them dear to their country. Still however the ſocieties in England, not intimidated by perſecution, perſevered in their conſtitutional object of reform. The London Correſponding Society was eminently diſtinguiſhed for energy, and for the ſpirit and compoſition of its Reſolutions and Addreſſes to the Nation; it pointed out the propriety of calling a convention, and the good which muſt reſult from ſuch a meaſure. From what had before occurred, it was natural to expect that any ſociety, avowing ſuch principles, muſt become an object of miniſterial perſecution. To propoſe, however, the paſſing a Convention bill in England at that time, was more than adminiſtration was prepared to attempt. Britons were not then ſunk into an apathy diſgraceful to the ancient character of the nation; barracks were not ſo general; nor was the ſoldiery ſo completely iſolated from the people as at preſent.

Meaſures, equally deſtructive of the public good, and calculated to retard reform (though not ſo likely to create general diſcontent) were adopted. The moſt conſpicuous advocates for reformation were arreſted, the Habeas Corpus act was ſuſpended with indecent and unprecedented precipitation; and yet, after a rigorous confinement of ſix months, theſe worthy citizens

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were honourably acquitted by fair and impartial juries. The defeat of the miniſtry gave freſh vigour to the people; and the ſpirit of liberty and reform increaſed in adequate ratio with the efforts to cruſh it made by adminiſtration.

The ſocieties proceeded in the great cauſe of freedom; and, after ſome time, when the heavy burdens laid on by the proſecution of the war, were more ſeverely felt by the people, the nation in general began to urge the great neceſſity that exiſted for a more equal repreſentation of the people in parliament.

The period was at length arrived when miniſters thought it neceſſary, for their continuation in power, to make a deſperate experiment; they had ſucceeded in all their attempts in Ireland, and this appeared to them a favourable moment for introducing meaſures of a ſimilar nature into Great Britain; they accordingly brought forward, and had paſſed into laws, contrary to the ſenſe of a great majority of the people, the Treaſon and Sedition bills, which are much more hoſtile to the conſtitution than the Iriſh Convention act: by the latter, delegated bodies only were prevented from aſſembling; and until the late proclaiming of martial law in Ireland, the people had the liberty of meeting in their different counties, pariſhes, and corporations, to deliberate on their grievances, without being ſubject to the *abſolute* controul of the magiſtracy. In England, *at preſent*, the *whole power* is veſted

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in the hands of magiſtrates, *not elected by the people!* And the late meeting at Pancras proves how they are inclined to exert that power, and to what lengths their complaiſance to the will of miniſters might be carried.

So far, it appears, has the ſyſtem on which his majeſty's miniſters acted in Great Britain and Ireland been perfectly *uniform* and *combined*: and had they not already proceeded much farther, this alone would be ſufficient to prove that their great object has been the total extinction of liberty in the Britiſh empire.

It now remains to ſtate what followed in Ireland, and to view the preſent ſituation of that country; beſeeching Engliſhmen to conſider, if it is not more than probable that ſimilar meaſures will be purſued here; and to conſider alſo if they are prepared to ſink without murmuring, under the like puniſhment and perſecution which now deſolate the Iriſh nation.

The diſturbances which the creatures of adminiſtration had originally fomented, for the purpoſe of creating *diſunion* in Ireland, had ariſen at the cloſe of the year 1794 to ſo alarming a degree, that the officers of the crown were unable, with the utmoſt rigour they could uſe, to reſtore tranquillity; and Mr. Pitt was convinced, that to obtain an object which he then had in view, that of raiſing ſuch a ſum of money as never had been before voted by an Iriſh parliament, it would be neceſſary to abandon coercive meaſures;

ſures; he therefore acquieſced in the duke of Portland's plan for forming a popular adminiſtration, inveſted with power to concede ſomething to the people. To this end Lord Fitzwilliam was appointed lord lieutenant, and arrived in Dublin in January, 1795. Addreſſes were preſented from all parts of the kingdom, expreſſive of the moſt lively joy at his lordſhip's arrival, and of the determination of the people to ſupport the conſtitution; at the ſame time praying for reform, and the entire emancipation of the Catholics. The country became every day more peaceable, religious quarrels ſubſided, which proved, that to be perfectly orderly, the people only wanted the example of a moral adminiſtration.

In the mean-time the commons voted large ſupplies for the vigorous proſecution of the war, an increaſed bounty to ſeamen, an addition to the troops of the line and to the militia; and other meaſures equally well calculated to aſſiſt the miniſter in his cruſade againſt liberty. In all theſe meaſures the people cheerfully acquieſced, merely becauſe they were taught to expect that a few of their grievances would be redreſſed, and that they were likely to feel ſome amelioration of their innumerable ſufferings. No ſooner, however, had the men and money been procured, than Lord Fitzwilliam was recalled, Catholic emancipation was rejected! reform was not

granted! and the people were placed in a more dreadful ſituation than ever: for their greateſt enemies, irritated by their ſuſpenſion from power, and the contempt and execrations of the nation, were reinſtated in their former ſituations, with full authority, and (as events have proved) the *inclination* to rule more arbitrary than before; and the Engliſh miniſter is now obliged to countenance their exceſſes, that he may rule the more ſecurely on *his own principles* in England; that he may be enabled to degrade the character of the nation, by proſecuting a deſtructive war, contrary to the will of the people, by ſquandering the treaſure of the land, that he may enſlave it with the greater facility.

On the recal of Lord Fitzwilliam, the people declared their diſappointment and diſapprobation in ſtrong and unequivocal terms; yet it is no leſs extraordinary than true, that Mr. Pitt expreſſed greater regret, and betrayed more uneaſineſs at the defection of the members for the county of York, when Mr. Wilberforce made, and Mr. Duncombe ſeconded a motion for peace, than he afterwards did at the diſcontent and defection clearly manifeſted by a great majority of the people of Ireland!

Such conduct, on the part of miniſters, and the deception and fraud practiſed on the nation, naturally led the moſt enlightened part of the community to adopt ſome *ſyſtemized* plan for the

the purpose of obtaining A RADICAL REFORM IN THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE, founded on the principles of civil, political, and religious liberty. From reflection and experience, they were convinced that no ſyſtem but that of UNION could ſucceed; they therefore formed themſelves into affiliated ſocieties; and as in the preſent ſtate of morality a ſolemn obligation would be neceſſary, they adopted the following moral and ſtrictly conſtitutional teſt;

"*In the awful preſence of God, I A. B. do voluntarily declare, that I will perſevere in endeavouring to form a brotherhood of affection among Iriſhmen of* every *religious perſuaſion; and that I will alſo perſevere in my endeavours to obtain an equal, full, and adequate repreſentation of all the people in Ireland. I do further declare, that neither hopes, fears, rewards, or puniſhments, ſhall ever induce me, directly or indirectly, to inform on, or give evidence againſt any member or members of this or ſimilar ſocieties, for any act or expreſſion of theirs done or made, collectively or individually, in or out of this ſociety, in purſuance of the ſpirit of this obligation.*"

So clearly were all denominations of Iriſhmen convinced of the propriety and perfection of this plan, that in a few months ſocieties were formed in all parts of the kingdom. But the moment the people began to feel the cheering influence of union, the vicious and corrupt, the oppreſſor and the peculator, trembled for their ſituations. "This union," ſaid they, "is a moral ſyſtem, which if permitted to continue or exiſt

exiſt OUR CAUSE IS LOST: if the people are ſuffered to act upon true principles of morality; if they are allowed to live on terms of brotherly affection, we muſt neceſſarily reſign with ignominy the power we have abuſed, into the hands of men whoſe government will be that of moderation and virtue. Should union and reform triumph, like the ſcreeching bird of night, we muſt fly to ſome retired haunt; there to fret and brood over our misfortunes, unable longer to flap our baleful heavy wings againſt, or ſcream the ſounds of oppreſſion through the cottage of adverſity. To prevent a calamity ſo dreadful, we muſt endeavour once more to ſtir up diſcord among the people; we muſt arm man againſt his neighbour; but above all, we muſt introduce into the country a foreign ſoldiery, whoſe hearts we can inflame, and whoſe principles we can corrupt."

Recourſe was accordingly had to the fanaticiſm of Armagh, and to Britiſh fencibles; but to make it more palatable to the monopolizing Proteſtant aſcendancy, the Peep-o'-day Boys changed their name to *Orange-men*: under which deſignation, as ſupporters of government and the PROTESTANT RELIGION, they committed with impunity the moſt wanton and atrocious cruelties. But as their oath more clearly manifeſts their wickedneſs, I give the following copy of it *verbatim*:

"*In the awful preſence of almighty God, I* A. B. "*do voluntarily ſwear, that I will, to the utmoſt of my*

"*power,*

" *power, support the king and the* present government;
" *and I do further swear, that I will use my utmost ex-*
" *ertions to* exterminate all *the Catholics of the kingdom*
" *of Ireland.*

" *So help me God.*"

The kingdom was inundated with Engliſh troops, who have equalled, if not exceeded the *Orange-men* for ſavage ferocity. For the honour of humanity, I ſhould wiſh to draw a veil over the mercileſs and wanton barbarity of theſe demons, who have diſgraced the character of man; but duty imperatively impels me to denounce them to the world; particularly to Britons, who I truſt, will ſpeedily take ſuch ſteps as ſhall be moſt likely to prevent the ſword of the mercenary from becoming the ſupreme law.

In January 1796, a party of *Orange-men*, headed by William Trimble, came to the houſe of Mr. Daniel Corrigan, a very reputable citizen, in the county of Armagh, pariſh of Kilmore; and, having *before robbed* him of his arms, which being *regiſtered*, he was by *law* entitled to *retain*, they demanded a piſtol he had *ſubſequently* purchaſed, to protect him as he travelled round the country (he being a dealer in cattle) which having obtained, they retired, promiſing his family protection; but returned in about twenty minutes, and forcing the door, Trimble murdered Mr. Corrigan, by lodging ſeven balls in his body from a blunderbuſs, and then deſtroyed the houſe and furniture. Trimble was afterwards apprehended, tried,

found

found guilty, and ordered by the judge for execution in forty-eight hours; but, through a *certain* interference, he was reſpited. He continued in gaol till the enſuing aſſizes, when he was again arraigned for having murdered Mr. Arthur M'Cann, as alſo for ſeveral robberies; but his trial was put off, and in a few days he was ordered for *tranſportation*, when he was only ſent to Cork, from whence he was *ſuffered* to go on board the fleet like a *good and loyal ſubject*.

The houſe of Mr. Bernard Croſſon, of the pariſh of *Mullanaghbrack*, was attacked by Orange-men, in conſequence of being a *reputed* Catholic; his ſon prevented them from entering by the front door, upon which they broke in at the back part of the houſe, and firing on the inhabitants, killed Mr. Croſſon, his ſon, and daughter.

Mr. Hugh M'Fay, of the pariſh of Seagoe, had his houſe likewiſe attacked on the ſame pretence, himſelf wounded, his furniture deſtroyed, and his wife barbarouſly uſed.

Information having been lodged againſt a few individuals living in the village of Kilrea, in the county of Derry, for being United Iriſhmen, a party of the military were ordered to apprehend them, the men avoided the caption, and about three o'clock in the morning a *reverend* magiſtrate, accompanied by a clergyman of the ſame deſcription, and the commanding officer of the party, ordered the ſoldiers to ſet fire to the houſes of the accuſed; the men obeyed, and all was conſumed.

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There were four houſes which could not be burned without endangering the whole village, they therefore gutted them; and, having carried out the moveables, burned them in the ſtreet. One circumſtance peculiarly ſavage took place on this occaſion, the wife of one of the accuſed had been delivered of a child only the preceding day; ſhe was carried out of her houſe, and with her infant thrown into the ſnow, while her blankets and wearing apparel were conſigned to the flames. None of theſe ſavage violaters of law and humanity were brought to juſtice; on the contrary, the reverend magiſtrate has ſince been promoted to a more enlarged benifice.

It is a well known fact, that in the county of Armagh alone *ſeven hundred Catholic families* were driven to poverty and deſolation, their houſes burned, and property deſtroyed by Orange-men. It may be ſaid, that adminiſtration was not the ſecret mover in theſe horrid ſcenes; but the following *facts* will, I think, enable the reader to form a tolerable opinion on the ſubject:—Three Orange-men voluntarily made oath before a magiſtrate of the county of Down and Armagh, that they met in committees; amongſt whom were ſome *members of parliament*, known to be the tools of ſtate, who gave theſe people money, and promiſed *they ſhould not ſuffer* for any act they might commit; and pledged themſelves that they ſhould hereafter be provided for under the auſpices of

government.

government. Furthermore, the ſaid magiſtrate addreſſed a letter to the ſecretary of ſtate, inquiring of him how he ſhould act in theſe critical times; that *hitherto* he had preſerved peace on his large eſtate, but wiſhed to know how he ſhould act in future; that if it was neceſſary for the preſervation of the *preſent ſyſtem* for him to connive at or encourage the Orange-men in their depredations, he ſaid, as a *man* he knew *his duty*: if it was *not* neceſſary, he hoped the magiſtrates of the county at large would be made reſponſible, and be compelled to act againſt theſe *depredators*. This letter was written in conſequence of a large meeting which was advertiſed to be held by the Orange-men in about ten days after: though he could have had an anſwer in four days, he did not receive one for two months; and when it did make its appearance, it was couched in ſuch evaſive and equivocal language that it was impoſſible to comprehend its meaning. It is alſo worthy of remark, that theſe unprincipled hirelings were never once mentioned in the anſwer.

In May laſt a number of delegates from the Orange-men met in the town of Armagh, and entered into Reſolutions, which they publiſhed: in theſe Reſolutions they recommended to the gentlemen of fortune to open a ſubſcription, declaring, "That the two guineas per man allowed them *by government* was not ſufficient to purchaſe clothes and accoutrements." Though the horrid

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and cruel depredations committed by these ruffians are innumerable, yet not one proclamation ever appeared for their apprehension; but when the slightest misdemeanour had been committed by any other persons, large rewards were offered by government for apprehending them.

I shall now proceed to enumerate a few of the *great blessings* arising from a *military* government.

In the county of Armagh, barony of Lower Orion, a man named Birch, had a quarrel with another person about *Orangism*; and an assault being committed, and examinations being lodged against Birch on this account, a magistrate had him taken prisoner, and led in derision by a circuitous way towards Armagh: a few country people came forward to see who it was the army had taken, (but as the commander of the party alledged with intent to rescue Birch,) on which a serjeant, notwithstanding the prisoner's hands were tied behind his back, cut him down with his sword, and in three days he died of his wounds. On the night of his wake, a custom usual in Ireland, when the friends and relatives of the deceased assemble to mourn over their departed friend, Colonel Sparrow*, with a large body of military, marched above three miles in the dead of night to the house where the corpse lay; and having stationed all the soldiers (except a few confidential

* This said colonel was at the last assizes of Armagh tried and found guilty, for the murder of Mr. Lucas; but on receiving sentence, he produced his majesty's pardon, and was *instantly* liberated! What a striking contrast between this and the case of the late William Orr.

butchers)

butchers) in ambuſh near the houſe; he proceeded to break open the doors and windows, entered the room, and cut the cords of the bed on which the corpſe was laid, tore down the decorations uſual on ſuch occaſions, maimed and wounded many of the perſons preſent, and dragged them clotted with blood and fainting to Market Hill guard-houſe, where they were kept priſoners, without having their wounds dreſſed till the evening of the next day, they were then liberated. The magiſtrate who came to announce *this grace, politely obſerved*, "He was happy to find there was *nothing againſt them!*"

In the month of May laſt a party of the Eſſex fencibles, accompanied by the Enniſkillen yeoman infantry, commanded by their firſt lieutenant, marched to the houſe of a Mr. Potter, a very reſpectable farmer, who lived within five miles of Enniſkillen, in the county of Fermanagh: on their arrival they demanded Mr. Potter, ſaying they were ordered to arreſt him, as he was charged with being an United Iriſhman. His wife with much firmneſs replied, "that to be an United Iriſhman was an honour not a diſgrace; that her huſband had gone from home the preceding day on buſineſs, and had not yet returned." They aſſured her, that if he did not ſurrender himſelf in *three hours*, they would burn his houſe. Mrs. Potter anſwered, "that ſhe did not know exactly where he then was; but if ſhe even did know, ſhe believed it would

would be impoſſible to have him home in ſo *ſhort a time.*" In *leſs* than three hours they ſet fire to the houſe, which was a very neat one, only about five years built; the ſervants brought out ſome beds and other valuable articles, in the hope of preſerving them, but the military daſhed all back into the flames. The houſe, and property to the amount of ſix or ſeven hundred pounds were conſumed; and Mrs. Potter, with ſeven children, one of them *not a month old*, were turned, at the hour of midnight, into the fields. Until the military retired, the neighbours dare not approach the place to give her any aſſiſtance, leſt they ſhould be put to death for their humanity! Suppoſe Potter to be not only an United Iriſhman, but a traitor, could it juſtify ſuch barbarity to an unoffending female and her infant offspring?

In June laſt a party of the Ancient Britons (a ſencible regiment, commanded by Sir Watkins William Wynne) were ordered to examine the houſe of Mr. Rice, an innkeeper in the town of Coolavill, county of Armagh, for arms; but on making a very diligent ſearch, none could be found. There were ſome country people drinking in the houſe, and diſcourſing in their *native language*, the ſoldiers damned their *eternal Iriſh ſouls*, that they were ſpeaking *treaſon*, and inſtantly fell on them with their ſwords, and maimed ſeveral deſperately: Miſs Rice was ſo badly wounded, that her life was deſpaired of,

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and her father escaped with much difficulty, after having received many cuts from the sabres of these assassins.

Last May the Northern Star office, in Belfast, was destroyed: the proprietors of that paper, from their steady patriotism, had long been obnoxious to government, and were then all imprisoned under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act. The person who at that time conducted the paper, was required by a military officer to insert a publication, which the editor refused, alledging, that it contained a *libel* on the *people of Belfast*. The next day a party of the military attacked the printing office and destroyed it; and an officer high in command was heard to exclaim, "Now, by God, the Star is demolished we may do as we please, for no paper dare publish any act we commit!" The following day two houses in the town were totally demolished; and on the night of the 12th of July, the anniversary of the battle of Aughrim, the town (Belfast) was illuminated. It never had been customary to light the shops or ground floors; the soldiery, headed by officers, went through the town breaking all the windows on the ground floors which they could get at; and the elegant house of Cunningham Gregg, esq. was destroyed by these heroes: nor was there any reason assigned which could have provoked such an outrage.

In June some persons had been refreshing themselves at an inn in Newtown Ards, county of Down, kept by a Mr. M'Cormick, and it was alledged, that they were overheard uttering words termed seditious. M'Cormick was afterwards called on to give information who they were; he denied having any knowledge of them, observing that many people might come into his house whom he did not know, and for whom he could not be accountable: he was taken into custody, and next day his house and extensive property were reduced to ashes. The house of Doctor Jackson, of the same town, was torn down on *suspicion* of his being an *United Irishman*; and many other houses in that town and barony were burned, or otherwise demolished, by English fencibles, on similar pretexts.

On the 2nd of June, Mr. Joseph Clotney, of Ballanahinch, was committed to the military barracks, Belfast, and his house, furniture, and books, worth three thousand pounds, destroyed: also the valuable house of Mr. Armstrong, of that place, was totally demolished.

In the month of April last a detachment of the Essex fencibles, then quartered in Enniskillen, were ordered, under the command of a captain and adjutant, accompanied by the first Fermanagh yeomanry, into the adjoining country, to search for arms; about two o'clock in the morning they arrived at the house of one Durnian, a farmer, which, without any previous intimation whatever

whatever, they broke open; and on entering it one of the fencibles fired his muſket through the roof of the houſe: an officer inſtantly diſcharged his piſtol into a bed where two young men were lying, and wounded them both. One of them, the *only child* of Durnian, roſe with great difficulty, and on making this effort, faint with the loſs of blood, he ſtaggered towards the door, where a fencible ſtabbed him through the bowels. his diſtracted mother ran to ſupport him, but in a few moments ſhe ſunk upon the floor, overpowered with the blood and water which iſſued from the ſide of her unfortunate ſon: by this time the other young man had got on his knees to implore mercy, declaring moſt ſolemnly, that they had not been guilty of any crime, when another fencible *deliberately knelt down*, levelled his muſket at him, and was juſt going to fire, when a ſerjeant of yeomanry ruſhed in, ſeized, and prevented his committing the horrid deed. There were perſons preſent who *ſmiled* at the humanity of the ſerjeant. On examining the houſe, they did not find a military weapon of *any kind*; and it was obſervable, that *certain noble perſonages* were afterwards particularly attentive and polite to the officer who was diſtinguiſhed on that night for exerciſing "*a vigour beyond the law*," not only of the land, but even of military execution, which has not been known ſince the days of Cortes to be exerciſed on the Innocent. Yes, mild and virtuous Mexicans! brave and

generous

generous Incas! you received a like puniſhment from the ruthleſs hand of the mercileſs *invader*. You beheld your villages devaſtated by fire, and the tendereſt ligaments of friendſhip and affection mangled by the blood-ſtained ſword of the oppreſſor. It was indeed in a dark age of ignorance and ſuperſtition; but at the preſent enlightened æra, that the people of Ireland, who are *boaſtingly* ſaid to enjoy the *manifold bleſſings* of a *free* conſtitution, ſhould be doomed to a ſimilar fate, is a dreadful aggravation of moral turpitude, horrid depravity, and deadly crimes.

Information had been lodged, that a houſe near Newry contained concealed arms, a party of the Ancient Britons repaired to the houſe; but not finding the object of their ſearch, they ſet it on fire: the peaſantry of the neighbourhood came running from all ſides to extinguiſh the flames, believing the fire to have been accidental; it was the firſt military one in that part of the county. As they came up they were attacked in all directions, and cut down by the fencibles: thirty were killed; among whom were a woman and two children. An old man (above ſeventy years) ſeeing the dreadful ſlaughter of his neighbours and friends, fled for ſafety to ſome adjacent rocks; he was purſued, and though on his knees imploring mercy, a ſavage Welſhman cut off his head at a blow.

The ſanctuaries of the dead, held ſacred even by the moſt rude nations, have been violated

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by these military heroes. In many places the vaults have been laid open to the dogs and fowls of the air, under the flimsy pretext of searching for concealed arms.

I give these instances of cruelty, amongst ten thousand others, equally or more greatly villainous, that could be adduced; all which took place previous to the 24th of July; and principally during the time that a pardon was offered to all who should come in, acknowledge themselves United Irishmen, and take the Oath of Allegiance. Though the generality of the people complied, yet all those who were particularly obnoxious to the aristocracy of the country, were persecuted with unremitting fury, and immured in prisons and hulks as formerly; so that the grace offered was intended merely to paralize and *divide* the people, and not to extend to characters previously marked.

I know that an Englishman having read such a statement of attacks, the most wicked daring and unconstitutional upon the rights of the people, will be disposed to upbraid the Irish as cowardly abjects, and in the warmth of indignant passion exclaim, "Resistance was a duty." This however would be unconstitutional, and contrary to the principles of their association. An union of affection and political sentiment was the great means by which they hoped to make a just impression on the constituted authorities. Yet the secret committee of the house of Com-

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mons has declared, that Iriſhmen *did intend reſiſtance.* "and ſure they are all *honourable* men." But if they even had ſuch intentions, they were deprived of the means; for ſo early as March laſt, troops were diſperſed through the whole province of Ulſter; and contrary to the law of the land ſuppoſed to be *eſtabliſhed*, previous even to the appearance of General Lake's *memorable* proclamation (too memorable indeed to be ever forgotten, while humanity holds her ſeat in an Iriſh boſom), by force, in the dead of night, entered almoſt every houſe, and deprived the people of thoſe arms, which by law they were entitled to have. In caſes ſubſequent, where informations were lodged againſt men for having retained their arms, it was the uſual practice, if on ſearch any were found, to burn the houſe; and if *none* were found, the houſe was alſo conſumed, *alledging that the information had been a good one.*

I have ſtated incontrovertible truths. Months would be inſufficient to enumerate all the acts of wanton cruelty which were inflicted on the inhabitants of Ireland from the firſt of April to the 24th of July. Since the latter date, I am not perſonally acquainted with the ſtate of that country: I have it however from unqueſtionable authority, that numbers, *without any ſpecies of trial*, have been tied to trees and ſhot, whole villages conſumed by fire, and their inhabitants put to the ſword, and, I believe, it will be

difficult to prove againſt thoſe miſerable victims any greater crime than their not complying with General Lake's proclamation, ſo contrary to the laws of the realm.

During the perpetration of theſe atrocities, at the contemplation of which humanity ſtands appalled, the people of England have looked on with a compoſure aſtoniſhing to the world.—What can be the cauſe of this apathy in the minds of Britons? It cannot be to indifference. For Ireland, however indignantly it may be treated, is of too much importance to commercial England, to be looked on with an eye of ſlight or ſcorn. Can it be to that luſt of power and aggrandizement which has ſo often called forth the indignation of mankind, and rendered them odious in the eyes of the world? Are Engliſhmen ſtill determined to be the arbiters of the fate of Ireland, at the expence of reaſon, humanity, juſtice, and liberty? Are they blind to their own ſituation? Do they not ſee that the fate of England is cloſely interwoven with that of Ireland? Are they not convinced that the Britiſh cabinet rules the Iriſh nation; and that the men who have eſtabliſhed a coercive ſyſtem in the one country are capable of attempting it in the other? When a military government is erected in the provinces, Britons muſt in their turn ſubmit. It will be therefore neceſſary for them to conſider if they are willing to relinquiſh the TRIAL BY JURY,

JURY, and to endure the cruelties reſulting from martial law. Engliſhmen, to you I appeal! Are you prepared to ſee a military banditti enter your peaceful habitations, armed with dreadful inſtruments of deſtruction, with hearts callous to every ſenſation but that of cruelty and luſt, violate your wives and daughters, plunder your property, and burn your houſes? In fine, are you prepared to undergo all the train of evils which now oppreſs and deſolate the people of Ireland? If you *are not*, and would wiſh to avert thoſe impending calamities, UNITE before it is *too late* to obtain a peaceable and radical reform in the ſtate of repreſentation. But on the contrary, if you are determined to oppreſs mankind, at the riſk of your own liberties, reflect on this indiſputable truth, that *Dominion founded on Tyranny and Injuſtice cannot be permanent or ſecure.*

Engliſhmen ſhould recollect the great advantages they have derived from Ireland; and not upon light grounds alienate the affection of ſo powerful an auxiliary. They ought to conſider who it is that has rendered their arms, if not victorious, at leaſt reſpectable in every quarter of the globe; who it is that has fed their fleets, ſwelled the glory of their navy, and enabled them to retain poſſeſſions in the moſt diſtant parts of the earth. But what (it may be aſked) are the advantages which they have gained by all this power and dominion? Nothing certainly

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but an insolent aristocracy, enormous taxation, and *paper money*; the national honour tarnished, the constitution violated, and liberty abridged. Then let them assume their wonted character, which is at present sullied even to degradation. Let Britons resolve to be free, and from *feeling* the *value* of liberty, they will learn to venerate the love of freedom in others.

Irishmen have upon all occasions sacrificed their interests, welfare, and happiness, to support British power and British Monopoly. They have long borne the limitation of their commerce, the discouragement of their manufactures, and the majority of the people their exclusion from constitutional privileges. Yet under all these distressing circumstances they sent their brave disciplined sons to encounter a powerful enemy, in climates the most destructive to the human frame, to fight for England in a cause the most detestable that ever disfigured the face of nature; and their reward has been coercion, persecution, and proscription. What return have they received for their intrepid sailors and soldiers, of whom they have been deprived by a *dispensing* power; and who ought now to be at home protecting their unhappy countrymen and helpless female relatives from insult and death? Ungrateful return! They have been loaded with an incongruous mass of licentious fencible troops, whose march through the country can be traced

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by blood and fire. Troops, who have ſhot the miſerable peaſant, on *ſuſpicion* of his being united in *brotherly affection* with his neighbour. Troops, who have burned the houſe of the *father* becauſe the *ſon* was *ſuſpected* of being ſeditious! Miſcreants who have torn the almoſt lifeleſs female from her lying-in bed, and turned her to languiſh in the open air, becauſe ſhe was united to a man *ſuſpected* of ſedition. Monſters who have held the diſtracted brother, while *before his face*, their brutal commander violated his darling ſiſter!! And will Engliſhmen remain mute ſpectators of ſuch atrocities? Will they ſanction by their ſilence, maſſacre, murder, and all thoſe other dreadful crimes ſo ſhocking to humanity and morals; the violation of virtue, chaſtity and honour? Will they not awake and ſhake off that *guilty* indifference which obſcures their once generous nature? Will they not ariſe for a moment above the baſe level of ſordid views, and by a glorious effort, ſnatch from death a brave people, who have laviſhly ſhed their blood to ſwell the fame of Britain.---But after all, ſhould they ſtill continue dead to every feeling but that of baſe aggrandizement and ſordid monopoly, let them open their eyes, and give but a tranſient glance at their *intereſt*, and they muſt perceive that their commerce is in danger of loſing its beſt ſupport; that Ireland at this moment, labouring under all her misfortunes, preſents to England an aſpect more formidable

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than ſhe ever did at any former period. No longer wraped by prejudice, or torn by diviſion, the great majority of the people are by a moral compact *indiſſolubly united*. Adminiſtration has of late ſtrained every nerve to revive the old animoſities, happily without ſucceſs. Even the Orange-men are faſt decreaſing: but were the number of theſe miſcreants multiplied ten-fold, they would be a mere nothing, if oppoſed to the great ſcale of national union. How fatal then muſt the conſequence be to England, if to this *national* union the Iriſh ſhould add an united hatred of the Engliſh name? And muſt not every rational man acknowledge that the indifference ſo very apparent in the people of this country about the ſtate of Ireland, joined with the ſavage ferocity of the Engliſh fencibles, has a direct tendency to confirm a rooted hatred, and to divide the empire?

It may be neceſſary to examine how far a ſyſtem of military coercion has advanced in Great-Britain. In Scotland, has it not already been cruelly exerciſed? And has not the death of many *innocent* perſons crowned the firſt eſſay of military execution in that country? Have not barracks been erected in every part of England, and does not the metropolis bear a cloſer ſimilitude to a beſieged fortreſs than to a commercial city? Did not the late meeting convened at St. Pancras conform in every particular to the

Treaſon

Treaſon and Sedition Bills? And did not a horde of magiſtrates and conſtables attend, diſperſe the meeting, and arreſt thoſe citizens whoſe ſteadineſs and patriotiſm were moſt prominent? They were held to bail, but the magiſtrates have ſince declined prefering any bills of indictment againſt them; in conſequence of which, they have withdrawn their recognizances. From this may not the public ſuppoſe (is it not in fact preſumptive evidence) that the conduct of the magiſtracy was not *ſtrictly legal.* Yet, had the people diſobeyed their mandates, or reſiſted their illegal oppreſſion, were there not TEN THOUSAND troops at hand to enforce the WILL of the miniſter?

Is the Bill of Rights a *dead letter?* For what purpoſe was Magna Charta wreſted from the hands of a tyrant? Is the boaſted conſtitution of Britain to *ſleep* when ever it ſhall anſwer the corrupt views of a profligate adminiſtration? Is it not the conſtitution of the people, without whoſe conſent it never could have exiſted? It is theirs by adoption, and it is their duty, and unqueſtionably their right to check its vices, and inſtil principles of virtue. *They* poſſeſs the right of remonſtrance; in *them* exiſts an inherent right of reformation; rights derived from nature, the holy gift of God, which no human authority can deſtroy—They are the inalienable rights of man.

The

The Corresponding Societies, the Whig Club, and the Friends of the People, all declare that their great object is reform; but this they have not been able to obtain, because their efforts have always been *divided*; and until UNION is completely established they cannot hope for success. The Whig Club, and those who call themselves "The Friends of the People," may keep aloof from the great mass of the nation, in the hope of being *leaders* in the public cause; but, fortunately for the welfare and happiness of mankind, the infatuation of looking up to particular men, or particular names, is going out of fashion. The people will shortly feel that they must trust to themselves *alone*, and assert their *own cause*: and when ever that happy period shall arrive, the *Whig Club* and the *Friends of the People* (unless they speedily change the pivot on which their actions turn) will appear pitiful, paltry factions, justly despised and neglected.

From what has been said, it may be supposed that the author is a member of some of the popular societies in this country; the fact however is otherwise, nor is it his intention to reside in England under any circumstances. But he is firmly persuaded that the people of Ireland are *determined to be free*, and that their generous hearts would rejoice in the assurance, that Britons

tons were marching with firm ſtep by their ſide on the glorious road to liberty and peace.

Iriſhmen are depreſſed at preſent by the iron hand of military power; but ſtanding as they do, immoveable and unappalled, upon the ſacred baſe of truth, reaſon, and liberty; I muſt hope, I muſt *believe*, that the period is not far diſtant when they will be enabled to make a ſolemn declaration of the PUBLIC WILL—It will be *unanimous*—It will be *impreſſive*—The ſleeping energies of the land will awake; for its mountains, vales, and ſhores, will reſound with the reiterated echoes of Reform! Peace! peace and reform!

FINIS.

(ENTERED AT STATIONER'S-HALL.)